

**SUMMARY OF THE
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 27, 2001**

The On-site Assessment Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Friday, April 27, 2001, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight-Savings Time (EDT). The committee chair, Mr. William Ingersoll of the U.S. Navy, led the meeting. A list of action items resulting from the meeting is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Appendix C.*

INTRODUCTION

The subcommittee for developing Appendix C (Ms. Uhlfelder, Mr. Sheibley, and Mr. Sotomayor) submitted a draft of Appendix C for review and discussion. Mr. Ingersoll sent the draft of Appendix C to the committee members.

DEVELOPMENT OF APPENDIX C

Ms. Uhlfelder described the approach she used in developing Appendix C based on Chapter 3 elements for on-site assessment. The subcommittee reviewed Chapter 3 components and the accrediting authorities current on-site assessment SOPs for content and format. Appendix C describes the items to be addressed in the on-site assessment SOP and leaves the details of implementation to each accrediting authority.

DISCUSSION OF APPENDIX C DRAFT

Mr. Sheibley discussed the need for determining the length in days of the assessment and the number of assessors required during the assessment. This procedure to identify the resources required for the assessment should be included in the pre-assessment planning, but must be flexible enough to allow for changes during the on-site assessment. It was decided that the Scope of Assessment section should be renamed Assessment Planning and should include type, scope, time schedule, and resources of the assessment.

The "Assessment Areas" section explains the processes and procedures used during the assessment. This section provides the guidance for mechanisms used during the assessment such as staff interviews and review of records. At a minimum, a detailed review must be conducted that would trace documents from raw data to final report package. A review should include a proficiency testing or an environmental sample evaluation, and should include original raw data records, how the data was generated, and SOPs used to analyze the samples.

Also discussed was the purpose of Appendix C. It was concluded that Appendix C should provide objective standards for the evaluation of accrediting authorities on-site assessment SOPs. These standards, when implemented, will promote uniform and consistent on-site assessments.

During the discussion, some of the sections were rearranged. It was decided that Records Retention (currently under the Assessment Reporting section) should be moved to Assessment Closure or given its own heading. Follow-up Assessment should be moved from Assessment Closure to Assessment and a line of clarification added.

Mr. Sotomayor discussed the issue of conditions for terminating an on-site assessment. These conditions included the laboratory not being prepared for the assessment, un-cooperativeness of the laboratory, and improper practices discovered during the on-site assessment. The accrediting authority must address these issues and provide a mechanism for resolving these problems. In some cases enforcement issues must be addressed and the accrediting authorities must be contacted. In certain cases the assessors may assume the responsibility for conducting an investigation. The on-site assessment SOP must provide guidance for these cases.

Also discussed was the need for defining the circumstances of an unannounced vs. an announced on-site assessment. This should be included in the Assessment Planning section.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Ingersoll reminded participants that the committee's last meeting prior to NELAC 7 was scheduled for May 9, 2001, via teleconference. The committee's allotted teleconference time having expired, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. EDT.

ACTION ITEMS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 27, 2001

Item No.	Action	Responsible Member	Date to be Completed
1.	Draft of Plan for the Demo-Assessment.	Ms. Moore, Mr. Friedman, and Ms. Uhlfelder	May 9, 2001
2.	Incorporate changes to Appendix C.	Ms. Uhlfelder, Mr. Sheibley, and Mr. Sotomayor	May 9, 2001

PARTICIPANTS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 5, 2001

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